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Prevention of armed conflict: strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 28 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit to you the Declaration of the Heads of member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan) to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Collective Security Treaty and the fifteenth anniversary of the establishment of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (see annex I) and the joint statements of the Heads of member States of the Organization on the situation in and around Syria (see annex II) and on supporting the mediation efforts of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement (see annex III), made at the summit in Minsk on 30 November 2017.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be issued as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kairat **Umarov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Kazakhstan
to the United Nations

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Annex I to the letter dated 28 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Declaration of the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty on Collective Security and the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Collective Security Treaty Organization

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, note with satisfaction that the Organization is marking its fifteenth anniversary having achieved tangible and meaningful results in all its areas of activity. The key to this success was the strong foundation laid by the Treaty on Collective Security of 15 May 1992.

The Treaty has proven itself as an adaptive and evolving framework for equitable cooperation that responds quickly and appropriately to changing circumstances around the world and led to the establishment in 2002 of the Collective Security Treaty Organization as a fully-fledged international regional security organization. A mainstay of our cooperation has been our unwavering commitment to the principles of a just and democratic world order, based on respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles of international law. For 25 years, our objective has been to create favourable conditions and a stable environment in which our member States can meet their full potential by strengthening international and regional peace and stability and ensuring the security of our countries and our peoples. We reaffirm our commitment to the principle enshrined in the Treaty on Collective Security and the statute of the Collective Security Treaty Organization that gives priority to political and diplomatic means of conflict settlement and resolution.

Throughout its existence, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which is a strictly defensive organization, has scrupulously observed the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, mutual respect and equal rights, and consideration for their legitimate interests. We reject all attempts to resolve disagreements between States and international disputes that involve the use force or the threat of use of force, incitement of inter-ethnic and interfaith intolerance and the erosion of statehood by other means, including so-called colour revolutions and hybrid warfare. In view of the continuing potential for conflict in international relations, our member States have made concerted effort to ensure that the Organization can respond firmly to any attempt to destabilize the situation or disrupt peace and security within the area of its responsibility.

We, the Heads of State of the State members of the Organization, believe that member States can use the Organization's existing legal framework to take their cooperation to a qualitatively new level by asserting the commonality of our States' strategic goals and by transforming the Organization into an effective, multi-faceted international structure that assures regional security.

Our Organization is continuing to take a proactive approach to improving its operations and enhancing its organizational and operational capacities. The States members of the Organization are fully engaged in further developing comprehensive cooperation in all aspects of the Organization's activities, including by improving its impact and authority in the international community as called for in the Organization's collective security strategy for the period until 2025, adopted in 2016.

The States members of the Organization have steadily increased their foreign policy coordination, including in the elaboration of coordinated joint responses to global and regional challenges, including crisis response and peacekeeping activities.

Since most contemporary challenges can be resolved only through increased international cooperation, we believe that greater coordination among international organizations is necessary to achieve greater synergy.

The Organization already contributes greatly to this important task. It has observer status in the United Nations and is cooperating actively with United Nations agencies, strengthening ties and building mutually beneficial relationships with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and other international and regional bodies and third countries.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, while recognizing that political means and diplomacy take precedence, assert that the Organization is continuously enhancing the combat capabilities of its collective security forces and assets and their readiness to take part in guaranteed collective defence in response to acts of aggression against any of its member States; strengthening regional security and stability; and assuring the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its member States.

We are particularly mindful of the need for greater military cooperation and greater technical and economic cooperation for military purposes within the Organization.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, note that the increased threat of international terrorism and extremism, illicit trafficking in arms and drugs, irregular migration, and the destructive and manipulative use of information and communication technologies to influence public opinion have prompted the Organization to focus on improving and developing its capacity to respond to a wide range of traditional and new security challenges, including those relating to State border protection. In this connection we reaffirm the statement issued by the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization on ensuring the protection of the State borders of its member States, adopted by the Council on Collective Security in Yerevan on 14 October 2016.

We are aware that foreign terrorist fighters are travelling to their countries of origin or to other States, including in the guise of refugees, for the purpose of organizing subversive and terrorist acts. This calls for greater cooperation between States to detect and apprehend those foreign terrorist fighters at State border crossings and to strengthen the fight against transnational organized crime.

We call on the States Members of the United Nations, international and regional organizations, and the international community at large to come together in a broad coalition to combat international terrorism on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In that context, the States members of the Organization highly appreciate the multipronged approach being taken by Russia to eradicate international terrorism in the Syrian Arab Republic and the readiness of the Republic of Kazakhstan to host international talks on Syria in Astana, which provided the framework for the de-escalation process in that country and laid the groundwork for reviving the Geneva talks.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, believe that a united front is extremely important when taking a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the world drug problem by focusing on specific measures

aimed at eradicating global drug production, and creating an effective system for combating illicit trafficking in new synthetic drugs and other psychotropic substances.

As we implement the Counter-Narcotics Strategy of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization for 2015–2020, we stand ready to continue playing our part in the fight against illicit narcotics production and trafficking, to step up joint efforts to counteract new psychoactive substances, and to fully support the radical reduction of non-medicinal use of narcotic substances in the Organization's member States. We are working towards the strategic goal of ridding the world of drugs, in accordance with the anti-drug conventions of the United Nations.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, emphasize that the transboundary nature of contemporary challenges and threats in the field of information security demonstrates the need for greater collective efforts and the adoption of balanced measures. In order to prevent modern information technology crimes, we intend to continue working proactively to improve information security arrangements within the Organization.

We believe that a sustained focus on combating irregular migration, which is closely linked to other forms of cross-border crime, is needed. To that end, we will continue to improve cooperation between the competent authorities of the Organization's members States and the full range of joint operational, investigative and special operations conducted by the Organization.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, assert our readiness to develop the existing system of standing and subsidiary working bodies of the Organization to ensure that it fulfils its mission in relation to evolving international situations.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, reaffirm that the Organization remains open to cooperating with other international and regional organizations on developing a new architecture for Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security and are determined to make the necessary efforts to ensure that the Organization continues to play a constructive role in international relations.

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Organization, reiterate our determination to further strengthen the Organization's collective security by conferring upon it all the necessary resources to enable it to protect, on a collective basis, the stable development of our States in a secure environment in which their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are respected.

For the Republic of Armenia
For the Republic of Belarus
For the Republic of Kazakhstan
For the Kyrgyz Republic
For the Russian Federation
For the Republic of Tajikistan

Minsk
30 November 2017

Annex II to the letter dated 28 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the situation in Syria and the surrounding area

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, reiterate our support for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. We advocate the rapid elimination of the terrorist threat and an end to the internal armed conflict in the country through the use of political and diplomatic means and broad intra-Syrian dialogue, without preconditions or external interference.

We note the decisive contribution of the Russian Federation to the elimination of hotbeds of international terrorism, thereby creating the conditions for an end to the civil war and the achievement of a lasting political solution in the Syrian Arab Republic.

We commend the contribution of the Republic of Kazakhstan to resolving the situation in Syria by providing a platform for international meetings in Astana. We call on the parties concerned to take advantage of the favourable conditions in order to revitalize the negotiations in the framework of the Geneva process under the auspices of the United Nations. We consider the convening of the Congress of the Syrian national dialogue and the promotion of other initiatives that contribute to the political settlement of the Syrian crisis on the basis of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) to be relevant.

We emphasize the need to intensify and ensure the genuine inclusivity of the intra-Syrian dialogue, which aims to consolidate all ethnic, religious and political components of Syrian society and its traditional institutions, and to involve ordinary Syrians in efforts to restore normal political life to the country and define the contours of the State structure both in the post-conflict period and in the longer term.

We express profound concern at the humanitarian situation in Syria and encourage support for de-escalation and stabilization of the country, including by helping to rebuild the economy, ending unilateral sanctions, sending additional aid to the Syrian people, assisting with humanitarian demining, preserving historical heritage and restoring essential, social and economic infrastructure.

For the Republic of Armenia
For the Republic of Belarus
For the Republic of Kazakhstan
For the Kyrgyz Republic
For the Russian Federation
For the Republic of Tajikistan

Minsk
30 November 2017

Annex III to the letter dated 28 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on support for the mediation efforts of the Minsk Group Co-Chair countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe towards a settlement on Nagorno-Karabakh

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the decision by the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that initiated the Minsk process for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, reiterate our support for the efforts of the Minsk Group Co-Chair countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The Co-Chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Group, represented by the Russian Federation, the French Republic and the United States of America, is the only entity in the international community with a relevant mandate. Its mission is to assist the parties to achieve a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through political and diplomatic means.

Owing to the efforts of the three Co-Chair countries, integral principles and elements have been drawn up as a basis for resolving the conflict and these have been reflected in joint statements on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by the Presidents of the Russian Federation, the French Republic and the United States of America.

While reiterating the need for an exclusively peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, we support the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries to settle the conflict on the basis of the norms and principles of international law, the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Final Act), in particular concerning the non-use of force or threat of use of force, the territorial integrity of States, equal rights and the right of peoples to self-determination.

We support the implementation of the agreements reached at the summits on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict held in Vienna, Saint Petersburg and Geneva in 2016 and 2017, which sought to prevent an escalation of the situation; promote compliance with the ceasefire and the adoption of additional measures to reduce tensions in the conflict zone; and intensify the negotiating process.

For the Republic of Armenia
For the Republic of Belarus
For the Republic of Kazakhstan
For the Kyrgyz Republic
For the Russian Federation
For the Republic of Tajikistan

Minsk
30 November 2017